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or not an element comprised in the integrated circuit is a feedback element, wherein said feedback element includes a transistor.

Please substitute the following clean-text claim for claim 14.

b2
14. (Twice Amended) A method comprising the step of:
analyzing information relating to the network to determine whether or not an element comprised in the integrated circuit is a feedback element, wherein said feedback element includes a transistor.

Please substitute the following clean-text claim for claim 19.

b3
19. (Once Amended) A computer program comprising:
a first code segment which analyzes information relating to the network to determine whether or not an element comprised in the integrated circuit is a feedback element, wherein said feedback element includes a transistor.

REMARKS

Present Status of Patent Application

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the thorough examination of this application, and the indication that claims 2-13, 15-18 and 20-22 contain allowable subject matter. The Office Action rejected claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which application regards as the invention. The Office Action also rejected claims 1, 14 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kuhns. The Office Action also rejected claims 1, 14 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,182,268 B1, to McElvain. Applicant has amended each of these independent claims herein to

accommodate the 112, second paragraph rejection, and to include a feature that that Office Action essentially admitted was neither disclosed nor taught in the cited art. Therefore, these claims are now in condition for allowance. An annotated version of the amended claims is attached hereto at Tab A.

Summary of Present Application

The present application is directed to a method and apparatus for determining whether or not an element in an integrated circuit is a feedback element. In one embodiment, the apparatus comprises a computer capable of being configured to execute a rules checker program. When the rules checker program is executed by the computer, it analyzes information relating to the network and determines whether or not an element in the integrated circuit is a feedback element.

Discussion of Rejections

The Office Action rejected all claims 1-22 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. In this regard, the Office Action did not accept Applicant's previous arguments as to why the claims should not be subject to this rejection. Notwithstanding, the Office Action has maintained its rejection. As best understood by the undersigned, the Office Action has advanced the 112 rejections because the claims have set forth "subject matter defined upon itself" allegedly making the claims ambiguous. Therefore, Applicant has amended each of these claims to limit the preambles to merely recite "an apparatus comprising," "a method comprising," and "a computer program comprising." Claim preambles like these are certainly permissible (e.g., U.S. Patent 6,405,363). Consequently, the 112, second paragraph, rejections should be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims Based on Kuhns

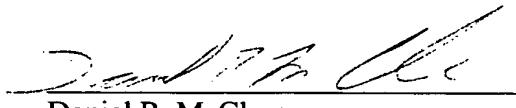
The Office Action maintained its rejection of claims 1, 14, and 19 as being anticipated by Kuhns under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and McElvain under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). However, the Office Action admitted that most of the claims (e.g., claims 2 and 15) contained allowable subject matter because the cited art (among other features) did not “disclose or teach a field effect transistor.” Accordingly, Applicant has amended claims 1, 14, and 19 to specify that the claimed feedback element includes a transistor. In the same way that the prior art failed to disclose the feedback element to include a FET (as admitted by the Office Action), the prior art also failed to disclose the feedback element as including a transistor. Therefore, independent claims 1, 14, and 19 were amended commensurately. Consequently, all pending claims 1-22 are now in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully submits that all claims are now in proper condition for allowance, and respectfully request that the Examiner pass this case to issuance. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

No fee is believed to be due in connection with this response. If, however, any fee is deemed to be payable, you are hereby authorized to charge any such fee to Hewlett-Packard Company's deposit account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,



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Annotated Version of the Claims Illustrating Changes Made Thereto

Claims 1, 14, and 19 have been amended as follows (where underlining denotes additions and brackets denote deletions).

1. (Once Amended) An apparatus [for determining whether or not an element of a network comprised in an integrated circuit is a feedback element, the apparatus] comprising:

logic configured to analyze information relating to the network to determine whether or not an element comprised in the integrated circuit is a feedback element, wherein said feedback element includes a transistor.

14. (Twice Amended) A method [for determining whether or not an element of a network comprised in an integrated circuit is a feedback element, the method] comprising the step of:

analyzing information relating to the network to determine whether or not an element comprised in the integrated circuit is a feedback element, wherein said feedback element includes a transistor.

19. (Once Amended) A computer program [for determining whether or not an element of a network comprised in an integrated circuit is a feedback element, the computer program being embodied on a computer-readable medium, the program] comprising:

a first code segment which analyzes information relating to the network to determine whether or not an element comprised in the integrated circuit is a feedback element, wherein said feedback element includes a transistor.